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PETUNIA PLANT NAMED 'SUNBELHOPI'

Botanical/commercial classification:

*Petunia hybrida*/Petunia Plant

5 Varietal denomination: cv. 'Sunbelhopi'

BACKGROUND OF THE VARIETY

10 The present invention relates to a new variety of  
Petunia plant originated from crossing of a Petunia  
hybrid variety called 'P5' as the female parent and 'E10'  
as the male parent.

15 The Petunia is a popular plant that is used for  
flower bedding and potting in the summer season. There  
are only a few Petunia developed, such as, 'Sunberubu'  
(U.S. Plant Pat. No. 9754), 'Sunbelchipi' (U.S. Plant  
Pat. No. 10,355) and 'Sunbelki' (U.S. Plant Pat. No.  
20 11,558) are of the spreading type, a medium plant height,  
abundant branching, and a high resistance to heat and  
rain and disease. However, there are only a few varieties  
having a great profusion of flowers, having a vivid  
reddish purple color, and a high resistance to rain,  
25 heat, and disease. Accordingly, this invention was aimed  
at obtaining a new variety having vivid reddish purple  
color and very small flowers, combined with the above  
features.

Progress

30 The female parent 'P5' (unpatented) used in the  
crossing of 'Sunbelhopi' is a strain of our breeding  
lines, having an outwardly spreading growth habit with  
abundant branching. It has small single flowers, the  
35 petals having a vivid reddish purple color.

The male parent 'E10' (unpatented) used in the

crossing of 'Sunbelhopi' is a strain of our breeding lines, having a spreading growth habit with abundant branching. It has small single flowers, the petals having a light yellowish pink color.

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In April 1999, crossing of 'P5' as the female parent and 'E10' as the male parent was conducted at Yokaichi-shi, Shiga-ken, Japan. The seedlings were obtained from that crossing. These seedlings were grown in pots in glasshouses and were evaluated from October 1999. One seedling was selected in view of its growth habit, flower size and color in August 2000. That seedling was propagated by cutting and a trial was carried out by flower potting and bedding from April to November 2001. The botanical characteristics of that plant were then examined, using similar varieties 'Sunbelchipi' (U.S. Plant Pat. No. 10,355) and 'Sunbelrikupi' (U.S. Ser. No. 10/327,017) for comparison. As a result, it was concluded that this Petunia plant is distinguishable from any other variety, whose existence is known to us, and is uniform and stable in its characteristics. Then the new variety of Petunia plant was named 'Sunbelhopi'.

In the following description, the color-cording is in accordance with the Horticultural Colour Chart of The Royal Horticultural Society, London, England (R.H.S. Colour Chart).

#### SUMMARY OF THE VARIETY

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This new variety is unlike any Petunia commercially available as evidenced by the following unique combinations of characteristics.

1. Compact and spreading growth habit with abundant branching.
2. Having a great profusion of blooms with the entire plant remaining in bloom for a considerable period

of time.

3. The flowers are single and small. The petal color is vivid reddish purple (R.H.S. N74A).

4. The plant has a high resistance to rain, cold, heat and disease.

The new variety 'Sunbelhopi' differs from the similar variety 'Sunbelchipi' in the following points.

1. The flower diameter of 'Sunbelhopi' is larger than that of 'Sunbelchipi'.

2. The petal color of 'Sunbelhopi' is vivid reddish purple (R.H.S. N74A). That of 'Sunbelchipi' is vivid purplish red (R.H.S. N57A).

3. The apex shape of petal of 'Sunbelhopi' is rounded. That of 'Sunbelchipi' is obtuse.

The new variety 'Sunbelhopi' differs from the similar variety 'Sunbelrikupi' in the following points.

1. The growth habit of 'Sunbelhopi' is spreading. That of 'Sunbelrikupi' is decumbent.

2. The plant height of 'Sunbelhopi' is higher than that of 'Sunbelrikupi'.

3. The leaf of 'Sunbelhopi' is longer than that of 'Sunbelrikupi'.

4. The apex shape of petal of 'Sunbelhopi' is rounded. That of 'Sunbelrikupi' is obtuse.

The new variety of Petunia plant 'Sunbelhopi' was asexually reproduced by the use of cuttings at Yokaichishi, Shiga-ken, Japan, and the homogeneity and stability thereof were confirmed. The instant plant retains its distinctive characteristics and reproduces true to type in successive generations.

#### BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE PHOTOGRAPH

The depicted plants had been reproduced by the use

of cuttings and were photographed during August 2001 while growing outdoors in 18 cm pots at an age of approximately 7 months at Yokaichi-shi, Shiga, Japan.

5           FIG. 1 illustrates a typical plant of the new variety of Petunia plant 'Sunbelhopi' growing in a pot.

FIG. 2 is a photograph a close view of typical blossoms of the new variety of Petunia plant 'Sunbelhopi'.

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#### DESCRIPTION OF VARIETY

The botanical characteristics of the new and distinct variety of Petunia plant named 'Sunbelhopi' are as follows when observed, during December at Yokaichi-shi, Shiga-ken, Japan, at an age of approximately 11 months.

##### Plant:

20       Growth habit. - Spreading.  
Plant height. - Approximately 25.5 cm.  
Spreading area of plant. - Approximately 40.5 cm.  
Blooming period. - April to late October in the southern Kanto area, Japan. The plant shape does not change throughout this period.

25       Stem:  
Length. - Approximately 13.7 cm.  
Thickness. - Approximately 2.0 mm.  
Pubescence. - Normal.  
Branching. - Abundant branching, especially secondary

30       branches are.  
Internode length. - Approximately 1.3 cm.  
Color. - R.H.S. 177B (grayish reddish brown).

##### Leaf:

35       Whole shape. -Elliptic. The apex shape is acute, and the base shape is attenuate.  
Length. - Approximately 4.8 cm.  
Width. - Approximately 1.6 cm.

Color. - Upper side color is R.H.S. 144A (strong yellow green), lower side color is R.H.S. 146B (moderate yellow green).

Thickness. - Approximately 0.3 mm.

5 Pubescence. - Sparse.

Flower:

Facing direction. - Slanted upward.

Type. - Single.

Shape. - Funnel-shaped, with five-fissures.

10 Shape of petal tip. - Rounded.

Lobation. - Shallow.

Waving of petal. - Weak.

Diameter. - Approximately 4.0 cm.

Color. - Petal; R.H.S. N74A (vivid reddish purple).

15 Inside color of the corolla throat is R.H.S. 9A (vivid yellow). Outside color of the corolla throat is R.H.S.5C (brilliant greenish yellow) with R.H.S. 200B (dark grayish reddish brown) vein.

20 Reproductive organs. - 1 normal pistil and 5 normal stamens. The stigma is club-shaped and R.H.S.N144D (light yellow green) in coloration. The style is approximately 4.7 mm in length and R.H.S. 145B (brilliant yellow green) in coloration. The ovary is R.H.S. N144D (light yellow green) in coloration. The stamens commonly are of  
25 variable length from approximately 4.7 to 7.4 mm. Pollen is formed in a quantity that is typical of Petunia and is near R.H.S.21A (vivid orange yellow) in coloration.

Fertility. - Fertile, but self-incompatible.

30 Peduncle. - Approximately 0.6 mm in diameter and approximately 1.6 cm in length. The texture is smooth.

Calyx. - Narrow. 5 sepals in fused at the base.

Seeds. - R.H.S. N186A (strong red) in coloration, approximately 0.6 mm in diameter, and generally round. The quantity is typical of Petunia.

35 Physiological and ecological characteristics:

High resistance to cold, heat, rain and disease, such as Powdery mildew. The resistance to heat and rain is

very strong.

5        This new variety of Petunia plant is most suitable  
for flower bedding and potting, particularly in hanging  
pots or planters. Pinching of old blossoms will enhance  
the formation of new blossoms.